

**Gediminas Grina\***

*National Defence Foundation*

## National Military Diplomacy and its Prospects

This article presents the development of modern Lithuanian military diplomacy, the future priority trends, and examines the features of service organizations. It is demonstrated that organizing military diplomacy is a totality of political provisions, encompassing the preparedness of the Lithuanian officer corps, activity support and supply chain, and the position of a military diplomacy organization in a system of national diplomacy. According to the author, the scope of military diplomacy is determined by the provisions of political leadership of the national defence system on the implementation of Lithuania's foreign policy in the defence sphere, as well as by the extent of representing departmental interests in similar systems in foreign countries. The article presents the specifics of military diplomacy and that of officers' service within allied (NATO) or EU countries and the peculiarities of service in other states often displaying pugnacious interests to Lithuania. The author sets forth arguments concerning the priorities of military diplomatic representation in the mid-term, and concludes that the significance of military diplomacy, in light of recently developing trends of an international framework, will further expand whereas fully-fledged diplomacy will be incapacitated to function without qualified military advice.

### Introduction

In 1990, Lithuania restored its independence, and the domains of specific activity and institutions indispensable to a sovereign nation were to be re-established. It is natural that "defence" institutions came into existence first – that is, on March 26, the Security Intelligence Department (VSD) was rehabilitated; on April 25, the Department of National Defence was reinstated. Since a sovereign, diplomatic service started to function only after the restoration of independence, the need for military diplomacy, or work in general, did not appear immediately in international institutions. Only in spring 1995, major Gintaras Bagdonas was assigned as Defence Attaché of the Republic of Lithuania to the Republics of Latvia and Estonia.<sup>1</sup> Captain Valdas Šiaučiulis was appointed as

\* Col. (ret.), Gediminas Grina was a Lithuanian Defence Attaché in the USA and Canada in 2001–2004.

Address for correspondence: Mokslininkų 11, LT-08412 Vilnius, Lithuania, tel.: +370 620 71791, e-mail: ged.grina@gmail.com.

<sup>1</sup> Now – Col., Director of NATO Energy Security Center of Excellence.

Lithuanian Military Representative to Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons.<sup>2</sup> No sooner had the first military diplomats been appointed than one came to understand that the regulations approved for Defence Attaché of the Republic of Lithuania on June 2, 1994, were not utilized in terms of those serving abroad. For this reason, in the summer of 1996, the Minister of National Defence, Linas Linkevičius, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Povilas Gylys, approved a new version of the Republic of Lithuania Regulations on Defence Attaché corps. Despite the approved regulations, misunderstandings on defence attaché subordination did occur; they materialized when considering defence attaché temporary duty assignments. This was confirmed by deputy minister Povilas Makalauskas's (at the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as MND)) rationale of July 5, 1996, on reimbursements for temporal duty assignments, wherein it is clearly pointed out that an employer of uniformed servicemen is responsible for reimbursements – that is, MND. Friction between political and military diplomacy were eventually predetermined by the “Regulations on Special Attachés” approved by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in 1997 and the Law on the Diplomatic Service (hereinafter referred to as LDS) approved in 1998, wherein the notion of a special attaché was introduced, and military diplomats fell into the category of special attachés, thus casting doubts on their exclusive status in diplomatic representation.

## 1. The Premises for Military Diplomacy

### 1.1. The interests of the Ministry of National Defence and the Lithuanian Armed Forces in foreign countries

Like other departments in foreign countries, MND has its interests, which are a constituent element of national foreign policy. One of the principal MND's functions is to ensure national security by military means. To this end, it is necessary to constantly pursue favourable conditions for Lithuanian military cooperation with foreign countries. Countries (Lithuania is not the exception) create a corps of military diplomats to represent interests of such nature. Military diplomats perform, to a large extent, the functions exclusively related

<sup>2</sup> Now – Col., Defense Attaché of the Republic of Lithuania in the UK, the Netherlands, and Portugal (he is also the first commissioned officer in the present-day Lithuanian Armed Forces; he completed military studies in the United States).

to defence policy and organization – that is, to procurement administration (in separate cases, special attachés of military cooperation are accredited to defence ministries), to secure cooperation between defence ministries and armed services, and to administration of diplomatic missions. On a legal basis they also collect information in the areas of MND and the Lithuanian Armed Forces interests (military political, military economic, and military technological domains). These are the sectors where political decisions, already undertaken at governmental level on such activity, and diplomatic missions cannot alter those decisions without the country's capital approval.

With the decision of the Government to create the defence attaché positions, political will is expressed, implying that while carrying out foreign policy it is indispensable to have timely politico- military advice available at a diplomatic mission of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as the Mission), and that the MND undertakes intense military (military procurement) cooperation and realizes the aims of information gathering.

## 1.2. A legal framework

### 1.2.1. International and national documents

The main hierarchical document regulating military diplomacy as an overarching part of diplomacy is the 1961 Vienna Convention (hereinafter referred to as the Convention) on Diplomatic Relations.<sup>3</sup> At the national hierarchical apex of this field stands LDS,<sup>4</sup> including administration issues of both the diplomats and the diplomatic service overall. In the Convention, military diplomats are treated as exceptional foreign representatives, not “diplomats” but authorized persons. LDS partly ascertains this “administrative” gap by introducing the definitions of “diplomatic staff” and that of “special attachés”. Military and diplomatic representation traditionally falls into three categories: military representatives under international organizations (e.g., a military representative of the Republic of Lithuania to NATO), military attachés (e.g., a defence attaché of the Republic of Lithuania to the United State of America), and military advisers under international organizations (e.g., a military adviser at the Republic of Lithuania mission under the OSCE). The activities of

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved from the UN website: [http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9\\_1\\_1961.pdf](http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf), 2016 08 02.

<sup>4</sup> LR Diplomatinių tarnybos įstatymas, <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.46EF9E1D52E9>, 2016 11 12.

Lithuanian military diplomats are governed by different normative legal acts, for instance, by the regulations of military representatives<sup>5</sup> and that of defence attachés/special attachés;<sup>6</sup> in these regulations, the activity of civil servants and of the corresponding governmental authorities transferred to conduct service at diplomatic missions abroad (cultural, commerce, etc. attachés) is laid down.

### 1.2.2. Functions

The functions of military attachés (e.g., defence) are stipulated in both the Republic of Lithuania Regulations on Special Attachés and in the Staff Regulations on Defence Attaché of the Republic of Lithuania.<sup>7</sup> Without the general provisions indicated in the regulations on the subordination and status of defence attachés, it is specified in item 6 of the Regulations that “a defence attaché appointed in a country shall be a member of the diplomatic staff of the Republic of Lithuania’s diplomatic mission, who shall be directly subordinate to the Minister of National Defence, as well as to the head of the diplomatic mission. After having examined the entrusted functions, it is palpable that the major responsibility of a defence attaché under a diplomatic mission shall be to consult the head of a diplomatic mission on military and defence issues (item 9.7)”.

Alongside their main functions, military attachés, in one way or another, support and enrich the functions of different special attachés (especially when referring to those countries wherein there are numerous Lithuanian communities – the USA, the UK, and Canada): supervise the presence of Lithuanian military personnel in a foreign country and report to the Ministry of National Defence (of whose control they are under) [consular activity]; promote the products of Lithuania’s defence (and not only) industry [a commerce attaché]; establish an academic and scientific relationship with similar military institutions [an education attaché]; organize exhibitions and excursions of artistic groups of the Lithuanian Armed Forces [a cultural attaché]; represent the Lithuanian Armed Forces in diaspora communities [an ambassador]. Military attachés along with the head of the mission are obliged to organize Lithuanian Armed Forces Day celebrations. Also, there is a tradition when defence att-

<sup>5</sup> LRV 2004 11 25 nutarimas Nr. 1494 “Dėl LR karinio atstovo nuostatų patvirtinimo”.

<sup>6</sup> LRV 1997 12 12 nutarimas Nr.1407 „Dėl Specialiųjų atašė nuostatų patvirtinimo“, [https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.61DF78DC7BB6/TAIS\\_426376](https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.61DF78DC7BB6/TAIS_426376), 2016 08 30.

<sup>7</sup> LR Krašto apsaugos ministerijos 2014 07 22 įsakymas Nr.V-639 „Dėl LR Gynybos atašė ir LR gynybos atašė pavaduotojo pareiginių nuostatų patvirtinimo“ (ankstesni pareiginiai nuostatai buvo krašto apsaugos ministro patvirtinti 2000 03 29 įsakymu Nr. 325, papildyti 2000 09 26 įsakymu Nr. 1124, aut past.).

chés go on other missions to participate in national celebrations and events. Defence attachés also perform such functions not typical of special attachés as participating in professional associations of military diplomats and in local military associations, or that of defence industry. Special attachés usually work only in their domain by representing the Mission.

### 1.2.3. *Agrément* “phenomenon” and accreditation process

Article 4 of the Convention specifies that the sending country is bound to receive the *agrément* that the newly accredited head of a diplomatic mission (embassy) is acceptable to the receiving country. It is noted altogether that the receiving nation has no obligation to explain why one or another person is not deemed acceptable. Usually, there is an unwritten law that one should wait for a reply for three months. Other diplomats or members of the mission do not require such agreement according to Article 7 of the Convention. It is true that in the case of military, naval, or air attachés, the host country may require their names be submitted beforehand, which in principle stands for the very same “*agrément*”. Some foreign countries take exception to this requirement, for instance, the USA does not make *agrément* necessary for military attachés from foreign countries.

The regulation on the approval of the appointment is stipulated by accreditation of military attachés as diplomats, not only under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also under defence ministries and armed forces.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, special attachés are treated as officials at diplomatic missions or members (non-state), whereas military attachés – are treated as officials of the sending country (it is premeditated that in real practice, military attachés are military representatives in those countries where they are accredited and have the written accreditation/authorization of that state). The same practice is also applied to foreign military attachés accredited in Lithuania.

Every nation establishes the procedure which foreign military attachés are bound to follow. For instance, the regulatory document of the Russian Federation<sup>9</sup> states that only after military attachés are accredited under the Directorate of Foreign Relations of the Ministry of Defence, can they also be acce-

<sup>8</sup>To compare – other “special attachés” are accredited only by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the state whereto they are appointed.

<sup>9</sup>Rukovodstvo dlja atašé po voprosam oborony, vojnyh, vojenno- morskich, vojenno – vozduznych, vojenno – techniceskich atašé i ich pomosnikov pri inostrannyh diplomacesskich predstavitelstv v Rosijskoj Federacii, Moskva, 2001.

dited at the State Protocol Department under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where they are given diplomatic ID cards. Hence the Russian Federation military attachés and their assistants are treated as diplomatic corps members who enjoy all the privileges and immunities and must respect the provisions of the Convention. Due to the essential considerations of counterintelligence, military attachés are provided with instructions about how they can interact with military institutions of the Russian Federation and individual officials, and referred to the procedure of travelling throughout the Russian Federation.

A similar procedure is applied in the USA.<sup>10</sup> It is a specific, three-stage procedure: first, accreditation at the Department of State (DoS); second, accreditations,<sup>11</sup> occupying different durations, at the Department of Defense (DoD) and at departments of the armed forces; third, the so-called special accreditation granted to the country representative individually. This accreditation is indispensable to work successfully, especially when representing a system of national defence. Such accreditation is issued by the corresponding department of forces whereto a military attaché of his country belongs. It ensures that a military attaché is able to directly, without a regular “visit authorization,” engage with institutions of the U.S. Department of Defense on such issues as:

- foreign military sales (FMS);
- international military education and training (IMET);
- international military strategic education and training;
- military to military cooperation; and
- file filling for official visits and requests for information.

This authorization is legally binding, especially if it is imperative for Lithuania’s official representatives to visit military bases or areas.

Hence consummated accreditation procedures bring military attachés to the starting stage of their work. After accreditation is granted, nevertheless units of diplomatic protocol of the Department of National Defence or other military departments remain as a first point of contact. For example, a military attaché with the status of a defence attaché is subordinate to the protocol unit of the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA, counterpart of the Second Investigation Department under MND, hereinafter referred to as AOTD) and other military attachés according to their military service (Army, Navy, Air Force), respectively.

<sup>10</sup> Guide for the Defense Attaches in Washington, DC, Section 1, Summer 2002, Produced by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

<sup>11</sup> For instance, on September 11, 2001, the procedures for accreditation greatly extended when accreditation at the Department of Air Force started only at the beginning of 2002.

## 2. The Peculiarities of Service Organization

### 2.1. The requirements for candidates, selection procedure and preparation

The major requirement for candidates to become a military diplomat, is to be a member of a professional military service. A candidate has to hold at least the rank of major.<sup>12</sup> Military service is regulated in different ways from that of civil serviceman or diplomats. A military officer cannot even temporarily be integrated into the Mission when drawing up a fixed-term diplomatic service contract with him, put another way, he cannot be reclassified as a civil serviceman for a certain period of time, as it would contradict the principles of military service. Due to this, one must include reservations for military diplomats in the Regulations on Special Attachés.

Selecting candidates for defence attachés of the Republic of Lithuania or their assistants is realized by order of the Minister of National Defence. The key principle is the military officer's "voluntarism". The reason for this is that a military officer is not intentionally prepared, to a larger extent, for political work which professional military officers may not be willing to undertake. Finally, a military officer is offered to leave Lithuania for a long time, contrary to half a year on a typical international mission, and for family or other reasons he may not have the possibilities to embark on a military career of such duration. Selecting a military representative or military adviser and their office staff is carried out by adhering to a common career planning principle of military officers of the national defence system. When selecting a military representative or adviser, the candidate is not bound by political (or partially political) activity, for he is directly subordinate to the military commander.

Having selected candidates, the Minister of National Defence shall choose the primary candidate. The names of main candidates and those selected are not publicly available since it is not clear whether agrément of the receiving nation (or nations) will be granted to the candidate. The MND submits the nomination of the primary candidate to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Committee on National Security and Defence of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania for approval. Referring to item 5 of Article 63 of the Statute of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, one of the trends of activities of the Com-

<sup>12</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos ministro 2014 01 27 įsakymas Nr. V-58 „Dėl profesinės karo tarnybos karių perkėlimo ir profesinės karo tarnybos karininkų rotacijos tvarkos aprašo patvirtinimo“, <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/e3c0c06088c211e397b5c02d3197f382>, 2016 09 30.

mittee on National Security and Defence is to discuss proposals and present conclusions relating to the appointment of defence attachés of the Republic of Lithuania to foreign countries. Herein, it is necessary to point out that upon appointing a defence attaché, a special requirement is set forth: the approval of Seimas Committee on National Security and Defence, which not required while appointing other special attachés. Having received approval, the primary candidate is assigned to the duty, making it effective from a preapproved date.

Introductory courses are organized for military attaché candidates.<sup>13</sup> The course aims to assist a military attaché in implementing the functions of an adviser to the ambassador on military and political issues; in effectively representing the MND in terms of appointment at the Ministry of National Defence; and in monitoring the processes of appointment in a country or properly accounting for them in accordance with the provisions laid down in the Convention. Also, consultations are organized for the spouses since they are involved in the diplomatic service as well. The candidates are taught to administer the office, perform representation functions and diplomatic duties, learn security and counterintelligence aspects, acquire the skills of observation and reporting. A major part of the courses encompasses familiarizing oneself with Lithuania's foreign policy as well as bilateral or multilateral relations, getting acquainted with the system of national defence, including the AOTD.

## **2.2. The place of military attachés as an institution in a diplomatic mission; subordination; office**

Both the Convention and national legal acts treat military attachés as exceptional members of the diplomatic staff in terms of the receiving country. Like the head of diplomacy, a military attaché is a national representative (military) abroad.

The military diplomat's office is an integral unit of the Mission, administered by the MND (via the military diplomat). One should point out that it is the military officers holding the rank of general or colonel who are appointed as military diplomats, and who should be treated as the presence of a high-ranking official at the Mission and in a foreign country.

The largest office of military diplomats is at the Republic of Lithuania diplomatic mission to NATO. The office is headed by a military representative

<sup>13</sup>A soldier is considered a candidate unless he is granted agrément of the Receiving State, and the minister's order on appointment is signed.

of the Republic of Lithuania to NATO, a general holding the rank of brigadier general or major general, who is subordinate to the Lithuanian Armed Forces Commander and represents him in NATO military structures. The office employs a considerable number of military specialists, working in various domains, ranging from military planning to logistics. There is an office of civilian defence advisers, which is subordinate to the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania and to the head of the Republic of Lithuania diplomatic mission to NATO. This particular office of military representation is accredited to the EU and exercises similar functions too.

The offices of defence attachés at Republic of Lithuania embassies are relatively smaller, consisting of one or two military officers or hired civilians. A defence attaché of the Republic of Lithuania to the USA and Canada, who resides in Washington, DC, is subordinate to two different ambassadors since he is accredited to Canada, too. It is quite natural to consider this, having in mind that a defence attaché is not a regular diplomat at Mission while a military representative in a number of respective countries. In the practice of military representation, there sometimes occurs some curious situations. While residing in Astana, a defence attaché of the Republic of Lithuania is accredited in seven countries, thus accounts to the Minister of National Defence, and works with the heads of seven Missions.

Military attachés on the issues of duty (business) organization are bound to the Mission not as much in subordination but in activity coordination. For instance, the head of the Mission cannot decide upon the purpose and value of a military attaché's temporary assignments, for they are often of ministerial character in accordance with the MND's recommendations. On the other hand, the head of the Mission can direct a military diplomat to execute a temporary assignment, providing he deems that military representation is to be appropriate, or that there is the need to fulfil tasks according to functional responsibility. In case there is only one military officer in a Mission, annual leave is granted to him only after having coordinated it with the Minister of the National Defence and with the head of the mission. There must be a scheduling protocol (visits, ceremonies, commemorations, and other events are planned wherein a military attaché is to participate) for the decision of both the minister and the head of the mission to take.

### **2.3. A military attaché as a military and political adviser posted at the Mission.**

National diplomacy is an implementer of common foreign policy comprising various components of national security, including the military safeguarding of national security. It is not uncommon that it is indispensable for the head of the Mission, as a state representative, to understand the various interests of the state wherein accreditation is granted. Hence the head of the Mission needs timely consultations and knowledge that the information in the functional area of the MND is being continuously updated.

Performing both routine and highly specific activities, the head of the Mission shall be persistently aware of the process of implementing a national defence policy; the plans related to the development of a military system; and how those plans are interwoven with cooperation and military structures of the country accreditation is issued in. Considering that defence ministries and other government institutions participate in acquiring military assets from the country where one is accredited, the head of the Mission is bound to comprehend the process of such procurement, including the interest to obtain specific information or encountering possible predicaments as there may emerge certain questions demanding immediate solutions, and the head of the Mission, as a state representative, is likely to be involved in it. Thus, here again, a military attaché has to always be prepared to provide consultations to the head of the Mission.

Often, the diplomatic community discusses those questions which are not necessarily related to bilateral cooperation. For example, the questions related to a NATO conducted policy. And in this case, the head of the Mission may need some information concerning the processes which occur in the domain of NATO defence policy or military decisions. Again, a military attaché must provide such consultations, bring some professional insights. The countries implementing accreditation often consult with embassies on the issues of international importance. Commonly, the issues regarding national security are inextricably entwined with military and political advice – whether they would deal with the Russian-Ukrainian conflict or military actions in Syria.

In addition to this, the Mission can delegate a military attaché to the events which are organized by defence institutions. For instance, it can be a transfer of military technologies, which is, in the case of the USA, regulated by the Department of Commerce; yet, in most cases, diplomats think that it is the military attaché's responsibility, because a concerned party is a military

institution acting by itself as contracting authority. Still, in the case of the USA, its foreign policy is more correlated with a military component, which in turn determines the military attaché's work at the Department of State, wherein an overarching military structure is present whose members prefer direct contact with a military attaché.

Finally, a military attaché ensures the provision of information to the Mission from military communities other diplomats have no access to.

## 2.4. Daily activities of military attachés

A military attaché's day-to-day routine is comprehensively illustrated by the activity of the defence attaché's office in Washington, DC. This activity can be ramified into five interlaced domains:

- military – protocol / administrative;
- military – political;
- military – procuring / technological / educational;
- military – social (spouses);
- military – patriotic (descended from Lithuania the citizens of those countries issuing accreditation).

Work at the Department of Defense is distinguished by an extensive scope since one communicates with military departments on general issues and with "sectorial" representatives of these departments. In terms of actual numbers, regarding Lithuanian military attachés (defence, land, naval, and air), there are simply twenty official contact persons, commonly referred to as *desk* officers. One has to discuss every issue that Lithuania and the national defence system cast concern over with several officials of this category. Here, a military attaché, like any other diplomat, sets up his preferences for activity. It is apparent that a considerable degree of efficacy is to be achieved by directly dealing with, and routinely searching for, new contact persons.

Participating in an administrative (protocol) chain of accreditation departments one should accentuate as an indispensable activity. It is this type of activity that professional military officers least like to do: fill in the forms; write congratulations on various occasions; participate in protocol events organized to commemorate certain events of the nation issuing accreditation. A military attaché is required to organize his agenda in order to participate in these events. It is essential to maintain amicable relations with diplomatic protocol administration officials and know them personally, for while conducting servi-

ce in a foreign country, one may come to deal with various problems, including personal ones.

Not only is diplomatic protocol necessary, but it is also treated as a means of executing other functions delegated to military attachés. One such means is receptions and their organization.<sup>14</sup> Ceremonies and protocols are an integral part of diplomatic service. Participating in receptions provides one with an opportunity to find new contacts and maintain the old ones. Certainly, during conversations at a ceremony, every diplomat collects quite a lot of information in which his represented country shows interest. Also, amid these events, they are likely to come across compelling personalities.<sup>15</sup> Every military diplomat is obliged to accept a protocol as an inevitable course of procedures, learn its nuances, and accumulate practices of protocol-related conduct.

A protocol also determines the need to sustain good relations with colleagues of military attachés. For instance the community of military attachés comprises four components: defence attachés and service attachés of detached associations. These associations aim to assist military attachés in communicating with the Pentagon's institutions. English-speaking generals (admirals) usually head the associations, thus avoiding possible controversies among their members. All this is undoubtedly synchronized with the responsible departments at the Pentagon. The head of the association had an assistant and treasurer, usually an officer from his office. The main format of interaction is a luncheon organized at least once every six months, during which the administration of the associations accounts for work completed, budget, and the like. A guest speaker is most often invited to deliver a report on relevant issues. Another form of cooperation and information gathering in the country granting accreditation are the so-called "educational visits". Besides all professional or educational elements, the principal advantage of such visits is that of strengthening interpersonal relations among military attachés and their spouses. Their organizational responsibility partially rests on the associations (next to the departments of military diplomatic protocol) themselves. The associations happened to resolve the issues of financial administration, in as much as protocol departments, according to the USA laws, find it hard to dispose of the financial resources of military attachés.

It is quite natural that bilateral relations between defence institutions are first supported at the political-strategic level. And it is exactly this sphere whe-

<sup>14</sup> John R. Wood, Jean Serres, *Diplomatic Ceremonial and Protocol: principles, procedures and practices*. Columbia University Press, New York 1970

<sup>15</sup> During one event I happened to meet a speech writer for the U.S. President (says the author).

re the military officer's knowledge of warfare is not sufficient; one should be erudite and possess a broader attitude towards a nation's governance and cross-border interrelations. In the USA's case, defence policy is formed at the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) with military advice being given from the Joint Staff. At the military level, the Joint Staff (J5) provides strategic military advice and executes the process of planning. It is not uncommon that among the questions planned there may be an impact imposed upon Lithuania, or its involvement as an ally. Thus a military attaché must be engrossed in the "process", know the course of developments, and inform his political and military authorities on time. A reverse process occurs through the USA's defence attaché in Vilnius. It is natural that defence attachés of both countries communicate directly with their *desk* officers in both capitals, as well. This process takes place without participation of diplomatic protocol, thus with its permission. It is to be noted that one of the hindrances, or problems, in communicating with authorized U.S. military personnel has to do with their frequent military rotations.

There is one more domain of the military attaché's political activity, which deals with participating in the academic life of the state he is being posted to, and falls within the activity of non-governmental organizations. The spheres of interest are simple; all discussions taking place in academic and non-governmental strata – which in one or another way may touch upon Lithuania's national interests – must be taken into consideration. It is this domain wherein cooperation between the whole staff of the Mission and sharing tasks are of monumental significance. Mission personnel have limited possibilities; therefore, the head of the Mission (ambassador) sets forth goals and priorities in compliance with the tasks raised for national diplomacy.

The World Lithuanian Symposium on Arts and Sciences, one session of which took place in Chicago in 2003, could possibly be treated as perfect involvement into the academic and non-governmental activity in the USA. There, Lithuania's military element attracted meticulous attention. A special session was organized to discuss both military and military technology questions. Dr S. Bačkaitis, a Washington resident working at the Transportation Department (USA), and Dr V. Benetis, who was studying at that time at the University of Maryland, greatly contributed to the participation in the afore-mentioned symposium.<sup>16</sup> Other Lithuanian military officers, who were conducting their service and studying in the USA at that time, were also invited to take part. It was actually the only Lithuanian academic symposium in which a significant number of military personnel of the Lithuanian Armed Forces gathered, and

<sup>16</sup> Now – Lt, Navy. (Ret.).

during which they could present some relevant issues about, and prospects of, the Lithuanian Armed Forces. The symposium itself was a wonderful opportunity to sustain and develop relations between the scientists of Lithuania and those of the Lithuanian diaspora and their communities.

The participation of military diplomats in the symposium format events, encompassed academic, non-governmental, and patriotic implications. Historically, after World War II, a large number of educated, patriotically minded people fostering Lithuanian roots and ethnic identities, left their motherland, Lithuania. What made them and Lithuania inextricably implicated is the language itself and the soldier – that is, the one who wears a military uniform of independent Lithuania – their symbol. The USA turns military diplomacy into a separate genre. Many Americans of Lithuanian descent enrolled in the U.S. Armed Forces; quite a number of them completed their service, holding ranks as high as colonel for the first generation of immigrants. The importance of contacts in diplomacy was highlighted several times; the military is not an exception. Hence this military and patriotic facet could be treated as a super-numerary military diplomatic act in both the governmental and non-governmental structures of the United States.

Having no military industry, bilateral cooperation with allies in the sphere of armaments procurement is important. Here, the USA plays a fairly considerable role. And thereby open up expanded horizons of activity for a military attaché, knowing that taking an interest in the arms industry is one of the essential spheres of activity. It is imperative to cooperate with authorized officials of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) on these issues. One of this agency's main functions is to administer to the military and financial support of friendly countries. According to U.S. procedures, financial allocation is coordinated with the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the Office of Management and Budget, and approved by the Congress. Hence an activity devoted to military national interests emerges from the domain of military attachés, becoming an overall part of the whole Mission.

In addition to armaments, military attachés are also bound to show interest in technologies adapted to the products for military use. Since Soviet times different branches of science (semiconductor physics, laser technology) in Lithuania have been developed at a global level, in which our ally, the USA has expressed interest.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> It was until 2000 when the Ministry of National Defense had considerable experience in the domain of military and technical cooperation which was further promoted. Lithuanian researchers were in a position to cooperate with the U.S. Defense Advanced Projects Agency, DARPA. It is known that researchers had the privilege of signing contracts with this Agency.

Other, but not less, important facets of the cooperation of military diplomats with DSCA deals with participating in U.S. planning and administration of military personnel of the Lithuanian Armed Forces training and education. Since the restoration of Lithuania's independence, Americans have called attention to the military training of soldiers within the framework of the International Military Education and Training program (IMET).<sup>18</sup> Having no particular purpose to describe the content and scope of this program in detail, it must be noted that ensuring supervision of soldiers is another pivotal function military diplomats (defence attachés) are to carry out: protocol requires defence attachés (or their assistants) to participate in graduation ceremonies and, where necessary, resolve non-education-related issues of Lithuanian soldiers, for instance, as a mediator or interlocutor between soldier and consular employee.

The military attaché's spouse represents an essential part of military diplomacy, too. This activity is realized through the involvement of spouses into their communities. Like in the case of military attachés, it is also made up of four components: Defence Attaché Wives Association (DAWA), and army, navy, and air force associations of military officers' spouses. Also, the spouses of military diplomats are welcomed to participate in (and become members of) associations of the U.S. Armed Forces military officers' spouses. The spouses themselves organize their activity, select their leaders, and organize a broad variety of events. Their main communal event is an annual day of the country represented. In the case of military attachés, their spouses form "circles of friends", or interest groups, in association to: Europe, NATO, Northern Europe, "Europe Minor", "the former Warsaw Pact", "the former USSR", "French-speaking", "Russian-speaking" specialization, age, and the like. Determination to groups is determined not only by formal criteria but also by personal attitudes, the military attaché spouse's education, and biography.

The visits of top officials of the Republic of Lithuania provide an additional and generalizing impetus to the afore-mentioned type of activity. Politicians and ministerial officials have a direct possibility to confirm the policy being conducted, or "bring" new proposals or ideas. In the corridors of Washington institutions, so called "seekers-dependents" are unpopular. It is fairly difficult for military attachés to carry out their duties, representing establishments with defence funding less than 1 per cent of gross domestic product. An officer

<sup>18</sup>The author had the possibility of studying according to this program two times: in 1997–1998, he completed the courses for Signal Officers; in 2007–2008, he studied at the NDU Information Resources Management College.

must possess and execute emotional self-control when hearing the desires his capital express for a permanent military presence of the United States or NATO in Lithuania, while correlating it with national defence funding. It is broadly known such attitudes to defence allocations (this can be applied to all Europe) leads to statements such as “Why does one have to defend you if you do not see the need to defend yourself?” The abovementioned example illustrates clearly the political conditions under which diplomats, including military ones, happen to work in Washington, DC. These questions are constantly being discussed at the Department of State and the Department of Defense.

## 2.5. Administration of military attachés

In 2000, the Minister of National Defence,<sup>19</sup> by order commissioned AOTD, in other words one of the national intelligence agencies,<sup>20</sup> to administer defence attachés of the Republic of Lithuania. Major Bagdonas was the first who had headed the unit, administering a corps of defence attachés. After he had been appointed director of AOTD, Lieutenant Akvilė Giniotienė was charged.<sup>21</sup> At that time, an efficient system of administering defence attachés was created, and over the past 15 years it has proved itself. The management of the corps encompasses three elements: selection and training, report management, and administrative and economic support. An important aspect of administration is ensuring proper work with classified information and documents.

### 2.5.1. Report and its management

The essential formalization of the work of military diplomats, as well as other diplomats, represents the written records of a diplomatic discussion, or the so-called *pro memoria*. A military diplomat also prepares notes on various issues and work reports. Naturally, any information received from a foreign country must first be treated as intelligence, regardless of whether it comes from the open or human sources. For reporting, it is especially important to get the information through human sources. Often, the information obtained

<sup>19</sup> LR KAM 2000 05 22 įsakymas Nr.538 „Dėl LR gynybos atašė veiklos koordinavimo ir kontrolės“.

<sup>20</sup> LR Žvalgybos įstatymas (Suvestinė redakcija nuo 2016 10 01 iki 2016 12 31)  
<https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.1881C195D0E2/sXMdGXdJMB>.

<sup>21</sup> LTC, Ret.

in this way is classified, regardless if the sources are colleagues or public officials. This is one of the reasons why military attachés fall under administration of AOTD. Military and political issues are discussed through administrative channels, and, where necessary and possible, by using certified information security means.

### 2.5.2. Administrative and economic provision

A tremendous amount of time to administer the military attaché office is required. Due to the specifics of military service (soldier status, access to ministerial, often classified, information, based on the “need to know” principle, information security systems available, etc.), the office is a necessity. Similar offices are in the possession of other military attachés from other countries. According to the unwritten rules, a defence institution to which a military attaché is accredited communicates directly with the office (or a military attaché if the office consists of one person), but not with the Mission.

Management of documentation is an obvious activity to ensure proper management of the office. Defence attachés must keep a record of incoming and outgoing correspondence from the office in consonance with the MND’s nomenclature of documents and clerical requirements. According to the procedure, military attachés are obliged to periodically present documents to the National Defence archive.

Military attachés are committed to disposing of the National Defence financial resources, according to the prepared estimate, and managing the assets entrusted to them. Thus managing financial resources and assets is an essential service function military attachés are to fulfil. Below are the key areas of financial allocations for the office:

- personal allowances – salary; compensation; healthcare benefits; relocation expenses;
- current expenditures – vehicle operating costs; subscriptions; expenses for temporary assignments; rent for housing; representation costs; postal, communications, Internet services; office supplies; charges for public utility services at the mission; and other costs.

The office reimburses the Mission for the expenses of public utilities under the principle of personnel proportionality. Were a diplomatic mission to rent facilities, it does so by referring to the principle of size proportionality. The MND implements financial and material supervision and auditing

through monthly financial statements and periodic asset inventory. The issues of military attaché supply are administered by the Regulation of the Government.<sup>22</sup>

## 2.6. Complexity of military and diplomatic protocol

It is well known that international diplomacy administration draws attention to idiosyncrasies of military diplomats. Unfortunately, these peculiarities in national diplomacy administration are only partially understood: hitherto military diplomats are attributed to the category of “special attachés”; it is tolerable in form, but not in content, where it distorts the essence of one of the functions of national governance.

As regards the precedence line, a military diplomat (“military representative” or “defence attaché”) is second after the head of the Mission. Such peculiarity of military diplomats must have been stipulated in the Regulations on Special Attachés under various conditions of service by making reservations for the Republic of Lithuania defence attaché (it should be noted that military representatives have different operational rules). From the standpoint of public service, military service is treated differently from civilian, including diplomats. Therefore factitious amalgamation of military and civilian services aggravates the organization of both services. Even the logic of the Convention says that military attachés are treated differently than “special” attachés of other departments. So, this area is obviously to be rectified, for military diplomats of different categories operate under different regulatory acts.

In order to finish regulation of military representation at the Republic of Lithuania missions at international organizations and diplomatic missions and to fulfill the governmental regulations (Order No. 8, “On a Legal Basis of Special Attachés at Diplomatic Missions”, of the Strategic Planning Committee of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania dated 1 April 2003, and Orders No. 34-8417 of 21 October 2004 and No.49-48 of 7 December 2004 of the Chancellor of the Government of Lithuania), MND coordinated the projects of draft regulations considering the activity of defence attachés of the Republic of Lithuania, formalised in the Law on the Diplomatic Service of the Republic of Lithuania, in the Regulations on Special Attachés of the Republic of Lithuania, and in the Regulations on Defence Attaché of the Republic of Lithuania

<sup>22</sup> LRV 1999 11 05 Nutarimas Nr.1235 „Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos diplomatinės tarnybos veiklos“, <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.73B0FB140F13/RaZWeEPKvK>, 2016 10 05

with institutions involved and submitted them to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. Discussions continued within the period of 2005–2007.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not approve of these proposals, and there was a lack of political will in the Government to recur to the Regulations on Defence Attaché of the Republic of Lithuania, which had already been established by the Government in 1994–1997.

What comes into focus is the reluctance prevailing in the layers of national diplomacy to apprehend the status of military diplomats. Item 22 in the Regulations on Special Attachés states that the defence attaché of the Republic of Lithuania is a representative of the National Defence System of the Republic of Lithuania in the country whereto he is accredited. Other special attachés are not representatives of any ministry since the receiving nation treats them as a serviceperson at diplomatic missions. These are the essential arguments as to why a defence attaché of the Republic of Lithuania (a non-diplomatic mission defence attaché) is a unique protocol person following the head of the Mission. The key prerequisite for both diplomatic and military protocol is the living quarters of military diplomats. Suitability of the living quarters is largely determined by financial possibilities. It is best reflected in the aforementioned resolution on the activity of the diplomatic service of the Republic of Lithuania. Item 4.2. notes that “...granting allowance to provide proper accommodations corresponding to the *employee’s post* and to the number of his family members...”. In assessing the size of allowances, a defence attaché of the Republic of Lithuania equates, in terms of protocol, to the status of a special attaché who does not exercise protocol functions in the format of the mission. Following protocol hierarchical order, a defence attaché of the Republic of Lithuania must be balanced to the minister adviser of the Mission and receive corresponding compensation.

As for the experience of other countries, the order of priority varies. There is an on-going “competition” between ministers, advisers, politicians, economists, and defence attachés. Which position is more important is determined by the national priorities in the country where accreditation is granted. Referring to protocol, in many cases a defence attaché goes first after the ambassador, while referring to functions – second or third, while first goes to the Minister for Policy. It might also be noted that one should insert a Deputy Chief of the Mission between the ambassador and the above-mentioned officials.

<sup>23</sup> Theoretical and legal documents were drawn up by lawyers Jolita Milerienė and Aušra Raišytė-Daukantiienė at the International Relations and Operations Department, MND.

As is well known, one of the key elements of diplomatic protocol is organizing receptions and participating in ceremonies at other missions or government institutions. It is well established in diplomatic practice that there are two dates which are celebrated: “National Day” and “Armed Forces Day”. These two themes demonstrate unequivocally the aspects of diplomatic protocol. The head of the Mission and the defence attaché, with their spouses, are two major participants of these commemorative events. So, no one diplomat is more loaded with “protocol” issues than these two members of the Mission. Naturally, protocol is a fairly expensive, but necessary, activity whose funding one should take into consideration beforehand, including an appropriate residence for holding protocol events. It should be stated that informal events in diplomacy are even more intense, also requiring relevant substantive provisions.

## 4. Military Diplomacy Procedure and Prospects

### 4.1. The scope and challenges of the present-day military diplomacy

Seeking to predetermine the military attaché’s need and his geography, it is significant to consider several trends having the potential to develop. At present, the principal guarantee of national security lies (and will likely lie in the near future) at the heart of the unity of NATO as an organization, as well as at the extent whereto the United States of America is willing to provide financial resources for ensuring Europe’s security.

Currently, the Republic of Lithuania has appointed 10 defence attachés (10 offices at diplomatic missions<sup>24</sup>) and four assistants. For the last twenty years, the geography of appointments has been developing naturally, considering ministerial interests of the national defence system and those of foreign policy. One should call attention to several aspects: Besides the office in Washington, DC, the office in Berlin was expanded, which is pivotal in the context of foreign policy and ministerial cooperation. Due to the regional circumstances, the office in Kiev has been considerably strengthened, with three military diplomats

<sup>24</sup> In Astana (Kazakhstan, China, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan), Berlin (the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland), Kiev (Ukraine, Romania, and Moldova), Copenhagen (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland), London (the UK, the Netherlands and Portugal), Minsk (Belarus), Paris (France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, and Luxembourg), Tbilisi (Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan), Warsaw (Poland, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary), and Washington (the USA and Canada).

are working at present. The absence of military diplomatic representation in Estonia and Latvia is to be logically justified. According to the tradition established a few years ago, officers in Astana, Warsaw, Paris, and London “cover” a wider range of countries. After a defence attaché of the Republic of Lithuania had been recalled from Moscow (on September, 2016), there was no military representation in Russia. An office in Moscow must be comprised of at least two military officers solely owing to the specifics of the relationship with the Russian Federation.

## 4.2. The problems of organizing military diplomacy

In every functional sphere, certain difficulties and challenges can be envisaged. Practice shows that one could discern the three main problems: selection (erudition and foreign languages), work at a diplomatic mission, and the family factor.

The process of selection is undoubtedly the most complicated facet of military diplomacy. The key issue here is that the training of military officers is concentrated not on educating diplomats but on developing leadership qualities. It is well known that cadets acquire multidimensional knowledge assets, yet they are not the graduates of an academic institution of international relations and political science. The very establishment of national defence and personnel staffing created favourable conditions for replenishing a corps of military diplomats. A considerable part of the Lithuanian officer corps incorporates military officers who graduated as reserve officers from departments of military education at Universities in Soviet times and actually had an overarching higher education and broad erudition; also, they were bright students with good academic performance. It became clear as well that the National Defence System lacked military officers having a good command of the English language. It was in 1995 when this aspect turned into a challenge. In the same year, it was the first time soviet military reserve officers had been appointed to conduct military diplomatic activities: Major Gintaras Bagdonas and Major Gintaras Satkus. Certainly, they were not professional military officers as we speak at that time; however, they were better suited to perform this type of mission than a “professional”. In the Soviet Union, intelligence officers (who belonged to, and still are part of, the Main Intelligence Directorate or GRU) were specifically trained to be able to work as military diplomats; there were not many military officers of Lithuanian descent among those mentioned. I deem that due to the officers’ inexperience to accomplish military diploma-

tic (and political) assignments in 2001, all defence attachés of the Republic of Lithuania were actually replaced *in corpore*, when Linkevičius was holding the post of minister. Here again they were substituted by officers with a ten-year experience in the Lithuanian Armed Forces – military reservists, with one exception. These new defence attachés had already graduated various military education institutions in the USA, the UK, Germany, Poland, and Scandinavian countries. By the end of the first decade of the independence period, the officers conducting their service in the Lithuanian Armed Forces performed with good communicative skills in English, German, French, Polish, and “Scandinavian” languages. It is known that had English already become part of a daily routine at work, there would obviously have been too small a number of those speaking other languages to carry out the selection of candidates. Thus it became the main criterion in the selection of military diplomats.

According to the Convention, the factual status of a military diplomat posted at the Mission brings some predicaments in daily service. The issue is twofold – that is, diplomats have little understanding of the purpose of military diplomacy, of the specifics of functionality, whereas military officers, in turn, have already grown out of the habit of “civilian” life. To establish a higher degree of reciprocal understanding, a candidate for a military attaché is taught theory and how to apply it in practice. The courses are led by former ambassadors, defence attachés, and representatives of the academic community.

Regardless of the afore-mentioned valid regulations specifying the bounds of a military attaché’s autonomy at a mission, there occur some abuses in service on the part of the head of the mission and on the part of a military attaché owing to the personal issues and dynamics of diplomatic service. Looking to the future, it is expedient to regulate the relations between the head of the mission and the military attaché in more detail.

Finally, we have the family factor in organizing the military diplomatic service. If diplomatic service is a whole life for a professional diplomat (in any case, a three to five-year rotation with the family), then this may be the only challenge for a military diplomat in life for which he – and especially his family – has never been prepared. The role of spouse should be addressed immediately. According to the unwritten rules, a military diplomat cannot perform service without a spouse. This automatically turns the spouse into the “assistant” of a military diplomat: the spouse has to speak the language of the country where a military diplomat is assigned, possess broad erudition (participate in military attaché spouses’ clubs), and be communicative. How to incorporate the spouse’s “skills” into the candidate evaluation system is an on-going challenge

for the human resources managers. According to the valid present-day laws, in order ensure social security, the spouse has to work in public service to ensure his workplace after returning from the appointment. The implication is that in the process of selection, one may have a good candidate, however, if the spouse runs a business, and simply cannot or does not wish to leave it, then in such cases the suitable candidate selected may be rejected. Until 2004, the military diplomats' spouses did not have any social guarantees, including insurance.

The children of the candidate are also a family-related selection challenge. It is an overarching issue and consideration of child psychology (e.g., stress: changing environmental demands, a foreign language, a different lifestyle, and climatic conditions). There is no doubt that families themselves weigh "for" and "against" and make a decision. In this case, the issue of children can determine whether a candidate is suitable to perform this service as well. There is also "the other side of the coin" to be observed. It is obvious that life in a foreign country requires paying more attention to the family than while living in the homeland. This is another determinant of selection. Military diplomats having a number of dependants face numerous challenges, too. Most often, they fall on the spouse's responsibility. However, in that case, the spouse is not able to fully perform the military diplomat spouse's functions (one should hire a person supervising children, especially those less than 12 years of age). I think it would be ideal to select those officers whose children have graduated from high school and live independently. Naturally, the average age of military diplomats is growing, thus making a number of challenges for the selection diminish. Moreover, it is quite natural that the MND has an interest in minimizing the costs assigned to the military diplomat as well.

### 4.3. A glance at the future prospects

It has been mentioned that the need for military diplomacy is determined by a combination of factors, ranging from political and technical preferences to financial possibilities, to realize them. Military diplomacy has existed for two hundred years; its role is modified every year. It should be noted that discussions take place on what officials we need overall, on whether the state is financially capable of maintaining them, and whether they can be substituted by civilians or modern telecommunications.

First, even though our world is saddled with modern technologies, no one is able to replace natural, interpersonal communication, especially if the mission requires expanding a circle of friends (this being instrumental in the

accession of the Republic of Lithuania to NATO and still urgent these days). It should be acknowledged that the world has not become a safer and more peaceful place in which to live. What changes is the nature of challenges and threats. Second, working as a diplomat, or performing any other job, one does not only have to prepare but also be able to do this type of work in general. Third, not only are military officers to be psychologically prepared but their families, too. One should not view it as a regular rotation of officers; otherwise, it would simply be a waste of financial resources allocated to the defence system. Hence the militaries complement diplomacy in another aspect not spread in civilian life or diplomatic service. These are education (both civilian and military), erudition, and awareness (political), foreign languages, preparedness of the family and its proper education, and work monitoring. In my view, having accurately evaluated the above-mentioned factors, one can turn military diplomacy into a more effective tool of national security, especially in relations with the USA and Germany. Speaking generally about the geography of the appointment of military diplomats, it is now fairly rational and balanced. The decision to assign the defence attaché's assistant to Berlin is among the welcomed ones. Germany's position has recently been especially important in ensuring Lithuania's national security. The MND's current decisions have also played a large role in procuring military assets from Germany. Such development of military political and military technical relations with Germany presupposes the need for larger military diplomatic representation in Germany, perhaps the most significant country in Europe. Were the financial resources to be found, the office in Washington, DC, could also be strengthened by assigning one more assistant. Considering the military diplomacy in Washington, DC, it must be noted that there is no sense in posting a civilian defence adviser, for the diplomats who are "not in uniform" at the Department of Defence have certain restrictions, thus not being able to completely carry out their representation functions. There are states which appoint such diplomats (it is popular among Scandinavian countries), yet these diplomats mainly supervise highly specific procurement projects.

## Conclusions

Military diplomacy is a natural component of national diplomacy. Its importance is solely determined by the significance of a military aspect in international relations. Of overriding importance are two factors contradicting each other: Lithuania's membership in the military political organization

(NATO) and Lithuania's neighbouring countries which have authoritarian tendencies and treat the organization whereto we belong publicly as a real threat. Thus, as long as these factors exist, the need for military diplomacy is obvious.

Military diplomacy, like other functional activities, shall be organized, administered, and financed. It is essential to enhance our awareness of the significance of military diplomacy in the strata of national diplomacy, for utilizing a military aspect may greatly help diplomats implement the tasks of national foreign policy.

Finally, one should view military diplomacy as a constituent specific functional element of the triumvirate: national security, foreign policy, and defence.

*October, 2016*

Copyright of Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review is the property of De Gruyter Open and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.